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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/21/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNGA](#) [SR](#) [KV](#) [MK](#)  
SUBJECT: KOSOVO: MACEDONIA READY TO RECOGNIZE WITH MONTENEGRO, WILL  
NOT SUPPORT SERBIAN ICJ RESOLUTION

Ref: STATE 91908

CLASSIFIED BY: CDA Tom Navratil for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Macedonia may be ready to recognize Kosovo by late September and may do so with Montenegro, FonMin Milososki told Charge Sept. 3. Demarcation is proceeding well. Macedonia opposes Serbia's UNGA resolution calling for ICJ review of Kosovo's independence, but has not decided whether to vote "no" or abstain. End summary.

¶2. (C) Charge called on FonMin Milososki Sept. 3 to reinforce reftel points on Serbia's UNGA resolution calling for ICJ review of Kosovo's independence and to inquire as to the latest state of play on Macedonian recognition. On the latter, Milososki reported that the border demarcation process continues to proceed well, with six of 17 stones laid in the Debelde area. He added that with some exceptions members of the local community were actively assisting the teams in laying the markers. Without committing firmly, Milososki reiterated the GoM's likely timeline of mid-to-late September for recognition. Charge pointed out that recognition prior to UNGA would send an especially positive message.

¶3. (C) Milososki also reported that Macedonia had offered Montenegro the opportunity to coordinate on recognition -- presumably to be on the same day -- and that Podgorica had accepted. He emphasized that Macedonia took this step to offer Montenegro cover, not vice versa, but admitted this step would help both governments deal with the Serbian response. He noted that for the first time Belgrade had publicly hinted that it may "de-recognize" Macedonia under its constitutional name if Macedonia recognizes Kosovo.

¶4. (C) On the ICJ resolution, Milososki confirmed that the GoM does not support the Serbian proposal, but had not yet decided whether to vote "no" or to abstain. Charge pressed for the "no" vote; Milososki replied that Macedonia would discuss the issue with other governments to gauge support/opposition, then decide closer to the vote. He reflected that while he expects the Serbian proposal to fail, he thought the proposal was "not a bad idea" in the context of Serbian domestic politics compared to other alternatives. "If only Milosevic had taken the approach of trying to use the ICJ," he added ruefully.

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